Percentage of illiterate youth

2734. SHRI URKHAO GWRA BRAHMA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the percentage of illiterate youth is still very high;

(b) if so, the percentage and the ratio of such girls and boys;

(c) whether it is also a fact that such ratio is higher in Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes than any other communities; and

(d) if so, Government's measures to eliminate the problem?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALI ASHRAF FATMI): (a) to (c) The percentage of illiterate youth in the age-group 15-35 years in the country is 28.97 (18.95 for boys and 39.63 for girls). The percentage of illiterate youth among Scheduled Castes communities is 39.21 (Boys 25.94 and Girls 53.30) and Scheduled Tribes is 48.28 (Boys 34.19 and Girls 62.13).

(d) The universalisation of elementary education and eradication of adult illiteracy from the two-pronged strategy for improving the literacy rate of the country. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is a comprehensive programme for universalizing quality elementary education by 2010.

The National Literacy Mission (NLM) is entrusted with the target of achieving a sustainable 75% literacy rate by 2007. The thrust areas of NLM are improving female literacy in low female literacy areas, organizing projects for residual illiteracy in districts which have substantial number of illiterates, setting up of continuing education centres for providing opportunities for life-long learning to the neo-literates and imparting vocational training to neo-literates through Jan Shikshan Sansthans. Special programmes for residual illiteracy have been taken up in the low female literacy districts of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Orissa and Jharkhand. In addition, a special literacy drive for eradication of residual illiteracy is also being launched in the 150 districts, which have the lowest literacy rates. Some of the steps taken by the Government to enroll and retain

children including Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in schools are:

* Relaxed norms for opening of primary/middle schools; a primary school within 1 km walking distance from habitations of population upto 200 instead of habitations of up to 300 population.

* Abolition of tuition fee in all States in Government schools at least up to the upper primary level. Infact, most of the States have abolished tuition fees for SC/ST students up to the senior secondary level.

* Incentives like free textbooks, uniforms, stationery, school bags etc., for these students.

National Bal Bhavan

2735. SHRI THANGA TAMIL SELVAN: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Bal Bhavan Board is authorized/ competent to decide the staff structure recruitment, promotion, creation of new posts, abolition of posts etc., in the National Bal Bhavan;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the relevant rules/notification etc., if not, the competent authority to decide and the role of his Ministry in this regard;

(c) whether before accepting the recommendations of the SIU regarding staff structure of NBB, the NBB Board/competent authority were consulted, if so, their recommendations/comments/views thereon; and

(d) the details of the posts abolished on the basis of SIU recommendations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT(SHRI MD. ALI ASHRAF FATMI): (a) and (b) The Board of Management of National Bal Bhavan is authorized/ competent to take decision on the matters regarding staff structure recruitment, promotion, creation/abolition of posts etc. in the National